USEPA - Region 2

Superfund Update

Hooker Chemical/Ruco Polymer Site
Hicksville, New York

June 1993

EPA SITE PROGRESS UPDATE

This fact sheet provides an update of the activities that have been conducted to address contaminated soils and groundwater at the Hooker Chemical/Ruco Polymer (Hooker/Ruco) site. In addition, this update includes information of other planned activities for this site. This fact sheet is issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the lead agency for site activities. The EPA, in consultation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), has been working to address the contamination at this site in order to protect the public health and the environment.

EPA is issuing this fact sheet as part of its continued commitment to public participation and to inform the public of ctivities at the Hooker/Ruco site.
This fact sheet summarizes information that can be found in greater detail in the Record of Decision for Operable Unit (Phase) Two (PCB contaminated soils), Remedial Investigation Report and other documents contained in the administrative record for this site. EPA and the State encourage the public to review these other documents to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the site and Superfund activities that have been conducted there. The administrative record, which contains the information upon which the selection of past and future response actions will be based, is available at the following location:

Hicksville Public Library
169 Jerusalem Avenue
Hicksville, New York 11801
(516) 931-1417
Hours: M-F 10-9, Sat 10-5

and

U.S. EPA - Region II
26 Federal Plaza
New York, New York 10278
(212) 264-7508
Hours: Mon - Fri, 8:30 - 4:30

SITE BACKGROUND

The site, located off of New South Road, has been used for industrial purposes since 1946. At that time two companies occupied the site; the Insular Chemical Company and the Rubber Company of America. Although two separate corporations, they shared the same pilot plant. In 1956 the two companies merged into the Rubber Corporation of America. In 1956, the company was purchased by the Hooker Chemical and Plastics Corporation (a subsidiary of Occidental Chemical) and was known as the Ruco Division. In March 1982, the employees bought the company and it became known as Ruco Polymer Corporation.

Since 1946, the facility was used for the production of various polymers, including polyvinyl chloride (PVC), styrene/butadiene latex, vinyl chloride/vinyl acetate copolymer, and polyurethane, as well as ester plasticizers. This facility is currently active, and manufactures such products as polyester, polyols and powder coating resins.

During site operations between 1956 to 1975, industrial wastewater from the facility was discharged to six (6) on-site sumps. This wastewater contained, among other things, vinyl chloride, trichloroethylene, barium and cadmium soap, vinyl acetate, organic acids, and styrene condensate. As a result of these releases, groundwater beneath the site and downgradient from the site has been contaminated. Currently, only non-contact cooling water is discharged into Sump 4. Since 1975, a concrete settling basin has been used to store ester waste prior to being incinerated on-site. Hazardous wastes are stored in drums on-site until they are disposed of at a permitted off-site facility.

From 1946 to 1978, the pilot plant used a heat transfer fluid called Therminol, which contained PCBs. During the operation of the facility, there was a release of PCBs to the soil adjacent to the pilot plant. Some of this contaminated soil was spread to surrounding areas by surface-water run-off, sediment transport, and truck traffic. Occidental has conducted several investigations, since 1984, to determine the extent of PCB contamination around the pilot plant. In 1989, an underground fuel oil storage tank adjacent to Plant 1 was removed, and the soils surrounding the tank were excavated, sampled, and found to be contaminated with PCBs. These excavated soils were covered with plastic sheeting, pending the remediation of the other PCB-contaminated soils on the site.

The site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1984. Initially, negotiations by NYSDEC and EPA failed to reach a settlement with the potentially responsible parties (Occidental Chemical and Ruco Polymer) to conduct the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the site. Therefore, EPA issued a work assignment to its contractor, Ebasco Services, Inc., to prepare a work plan and conduct the RI/FS. However, in September 1988, after the work plan was finalized, Occidental agreed to perform the work. In September 1989, RI/FS field work commenced for the RI/FS. The RI Report was approved in December of 1992 and has been placed in the repositories for public review.

Occidental proposed to perform an early action to remediate the PCB contaminated areas. To support such an action, Occidental prepared a Focused Feasibility Study (FFS) which analyzed alternatives to address the PCB-contaminated areas on the site.

SCOPE AND ROLE OF ACTIONS

The contamination at the Hooker/Ruco site has been separated into two distinct remedial actions or phases (also referred to as operable units,(OU)). The Proposed Plan, Focused Feasibility Study and Record of Decision (ROD) previously released for this site were for the second phase. The RI Report and Risk Assessment Report recently placed in the repository are for the first phase. The remedial phases are divided as follows:

- Phase One (operable unit one, OU 1): Addresses the majority of the site; soil and

groundwater contamination beneath the site from previous disposal activities.

- Phase Two (operable unit two, OU 2): PCB-contaminated soils surrounding the pilot plant and recharge basin (sump) 3.

- A third area of concern that has not been officially designated as a separate phase is the downgradient (south of the Ruco property) groundwater.

The RI Report was completed and approved in December of 1992, and includes the results of the investigations conducted for the entire Ruco property (soils, sediments, groundwater, surface water). Phase One will address soils contamination in the recharge basins that were not addressed as part of Phase Two, and the groundwater beneath the Ruco property. A Draft Feasibility Study (FS) Report that analyzes alternatives for Phase One has been reviewed by the EPA and NYSDEC and is currently being revised. It is expected that the Revised FS will be ready for public release by July 30, 1993. At that time the EPA will release the Proposed Remedial Action Plan (Proposed Plan) for Phase One, for public comment.

The second Phase addressed a portion of the site for which the nature and extent of contamination was previously defined and the technologies for treatment are different from the rest of the site. Therefore, the remedial action for Phase Two was started before the Phase One RI/FS was completed. Phase Two addressed four areas of PCB-contaminated soils, surrounding the pilot plant. They were: 1) the direct spill area; 2) transport related areas; 3) the previously excavated soils; and, 4) the impacted recharge basin number 3.

Contamination in the groundwater downgradient (south) of the Hooker/Ruco site and the adjacent Grumman/Navy sites has been identified and is currently being investigated. The EPA is working in cooperation with the NYSDEC to determine the nature and extent of this contamination.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

The alternatives analyzed for Phase Two to address the PCB contaminated soil were presented in the previously released Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan was then presented at a Public Meeting held at the Town of Oyster Bay Town Hall on August 7, 1990. The preferred alternative was chosen by the EPA and formally documented in the Record of Decision (ROD) signed in September of 1990. The actions specified in the ROD to remediate the PCB contaminated soils called for the off-site landfilling of soils in excess of 10 ppm PCBs and thermal destruction of soils in excess of 500 ppm PCBs.

This alternative was executed by the performance of a Remedial Design and Remedial Action. The Remedial Design was completed in April of 1992 followed by the actual field work (Remedial Action). The Remedial Action started in May of 1992 and was completed in September of 1992. The Remedial Action involved the off-site landfilling of approximately 1,957 cubic yards of soils with PCB concentrations between 10 ppm and 500 ppm, and off-site thermal destruction of approximately 52 cubic yards of soils in excess of 500 ppm.

In order to ensure the complete removal of material over 10 ppm in the recharge basin, the contaminated soil at the bottom of the basin was excavated to a depth of 10 feet from the existing surface. Confirmatory sampling was conducted to ensure that the soils which remained after the excavation had PCB concentrations not exceeding 10 ppm.

In summary, the Remedial Action of Phase Two achieved substantial risk reduction through the removal of soils contaminated with PCBs above 10 ppm from the site. Soils with concentrations between 10 ppm and 500 ppm were landfilled at an off-site TSCA-approved facility, and soils with PCB concentrations over 500 ppm were thermally destroyed at an off-site TSCA-approved thermal treatment facility. Excavated areas were filled with clean soil and then, these areas, except for the recharge basin, were paved with asphalt as appropriate.

The Remedial Investigation for Phase One was completed and the RI Report was approved in 1992. The RI Report contains information on the contaminants present at the site. Some of the contamination has been addressed in the execution of the Phase Two Remedial Action as described above. Alternatives to address the remaining contamination are being evaluated in the Feasibility Study (FS) Report development process. A Draft FS Report has been received and reviewed by NYSDEC and EPA. The FS Report is currently being revised.

Additional soil borings were conducted in October of 1992 to investigate the possibility of soil contamination in an area of the site that was not previously examined. The results of these borings did not reveal any new or significant levels of contamination at the site.

A Work Plan to conduct further investigations of some electromagnetic (EM) anomalies that were identified in the original field investigation has been submitted by Occidental. The occurrence of electromagnetic anomalies may indicate the presence of a buried underground metallic objects such as a tank or a drum. This Work Plan specifies the approach to conducting additional investigations to confirm the presence of these anomalies and, if necessary, excavate the buried objects.

FUTURE ACTIONS

The next step in the Superfund process for Phase One will be the finalization of the FS report. This report, along with EPA's Proposed Plan will be released for Public comment. It is anticipated that the FS Report and the Proposed Plan will be completed in July of 1993. A public announcement will indicate the availability of these documents for review. A Public Meeting will be held to present the Proposed Plan and to field Public comments on the Proposed Plan. A date, time and location for this meeting will be published in the local newspaper.

Following the Public Meeting and comment period the EPA will evaluate the responses received and modify the Proposed Plan if necessary. EPA will then issue a Record of Decision (ROD) document. This document will describe the remedy chosen to address any contamination problems associated with Phase One. The EPA anticipates a ROD can be completed by September of 1993.

The groundwater contamination downgradient of the Ruco property is part of a larger regional problem that is currently being investigated through the cooperative efforts of the EPA and NYSDEC. Further investigation of this problem is anticipated including the installation of monitoring wells to define the nature and extent of the groundwater contamination. Actions are being taken to monitor groundwater in the vicinity of the Bethpage Water District supply wells. Currently a treatment system has been installed on one of the supply wells to ensure the safety of water supply delivered to Bethpage residents.

The field work to conduct the additional investigations to confirm electromagnetic anomalies identified at the site are expected to begin, and be completed, in 1993.

COMMUNITY ROLE IN THE SUPERFUND PROCESS

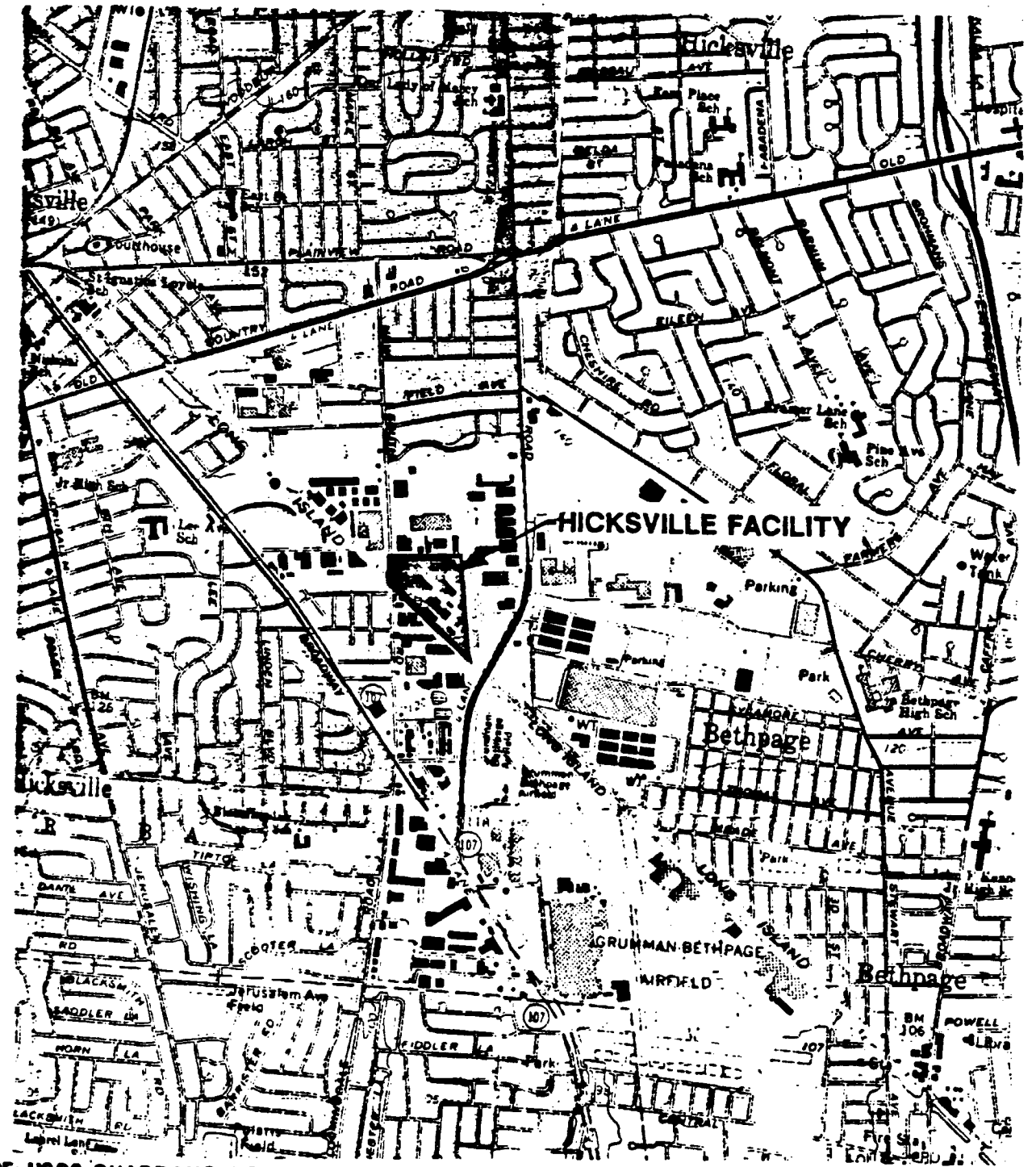
EPA and NYSDEC rely on public input to ensure that the remedies selected for each Superfund site are fully understood and that the agencies have considered the concerns of the local community, as well as ensuring that the selected remedies provide an effective solution.

EPA invites public review of the documents in the repositories to encourage public participation in the Superfund process. The FFS Report, the Record of Decision, Endangerment Assessment, Remedial Investigation Report, Risk Assessment and other documents are being made available to the public. Questions concerning these documents or this site should be addressed to:

Ann Rychlenski, EPA's Community Relations Coordinator
(212) 264-7214

or

Dale J. Carpenter, Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region II - Room 747
26 Federal Plaza
New York, New York 10278
(212) 264-9342



SOURCE: USGS QUADRANGLES HICKSVILLE,NEW YORK, FREEPORT,NEW YORK, HUNTINGTON,NEW YORK AND AMITYVILLE,NEW YORK

0 2000

SCALE IN FEET

OCCIDENTAL CHEMICAL CORPORATION
HOOKER/RUCO SITE
HICKSVILLE, NEW YORK

SITE LOCATION MAP

DATE	REVISED

PREPARED BY:

LIBGETTE, BRASHEARS & GRAHAM, INC.
Professional Ground-Water Consultants
72 Danbury Road
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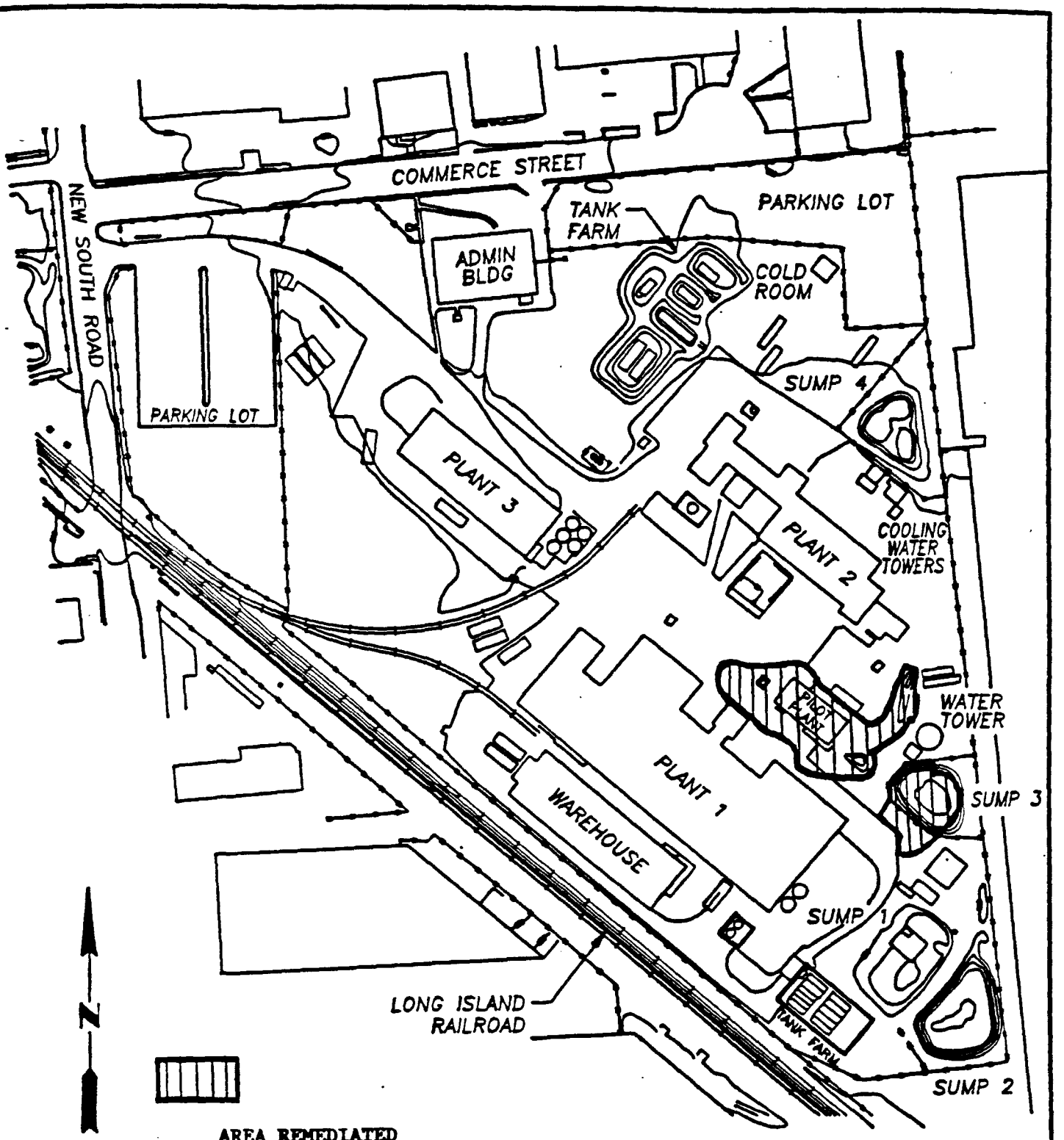
203-762-1207

DATE:

FIGURE 1.1



AREA REMEDIATED BY PHASE TWO REMEDIAL ACTION

0 150
SCALE IN FEET

OCCIDENTAL CHEMICAL CORPORATION
HOOKER/RUCO SITE
HICKSVILLE, NEW YORK

AERIAL SITE MAP
3-13-89

DATE	REVISED

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DATE: 5/4/92 FIGURE: 1.21